

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
LONG-TERM CARE ADVISORY COUNCIL



Appropriations Committee (February 18, 2009)
Statement on Governor Rell's Budget Proposal:

Program Cuts: A Giant Step in the Wrong Direction

The Long-Term Care Advisory Council opposes Governor Rell's proposed budget cuts for the 2010-2011 biennium as they do not support choice and rebalancing in long-term care. Specifically,

- **CT Home Care Program for Elders:** The Governor's proposal caps enrollment in the state-funded portion of this program and reduces overall program funding. Individuals who could remain in the community at very low cost will be waitlisted and may end up in a nursing home on Medicaid at a significantly higher cost to the state;
- **Home and Community-Based Waivers:** The Governor's proposal does not open the Personal Care Assistant (PCA) or Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) waivers to individuals who are currently waitlisted for services. Individuals who could effectively be served in the community are at risk of nursing home placement. It also fails to extend the program to reduce the waiting list for services under the DDS waivers;
- **Reimbursement Rates:** The Governor's proposal does not provide sufficient reimbursement rates to providers across the continuum of long-term care, threatening their existence;
- **CT Commission on Aging:** It eliminates the CT Commission on Aging and in doing so removes internal oversight and objective research, and deprives older adults of a nonpartisan voice in state government;
- **Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program:** It removes \$360,000 in state funding for this oversight agency which safeguards the rights of nursing home residents;
- **Prescription Drugs:** It drastically changes ConnPACE, Connecticut's hallmark prescription drug program for older adults and persons with disabilities, by limiting enrollment by imposing an asset test of \$12,000 and restricting new applications to a limited time period each year, increasing cost-sharing for participation, and limiting the scope of coverage. It also makes serious cuts and reductions in the scope of Medicaid prescription drug coverage; and,
- **Transportation:** It eliminates the state's highly valued municipal matching grant for Dial-a-Ride. Transportation is a critical support, enabling older adults and persons with disabilities to live on a cost-effective and more personally satisfying basis in the community.

Program Delays:

- **Money Follows the Person (MFP):** 1) The proposal delays the establishment of the legislatively mandated Long-Term Care Reinvestment Account, which will be funded through new federal FMAP funds (MFP "enhanced match"). This Reinvestment Account is necessary to ensure that services are available to people who are in their homes and communities; and, 2) It delays the implementation of Money Follows the Person 2 (MFP-2). MFP-2 was passed into legislation in 2008 and is intended to create additional nursing home cost savings for the State by serving individuals who do not meet the MFP requirement of having been institutionalized for 6 months.

Other:

- **Creation of the State Department on Aging:** The Council asserts that the creation of a new separate Department on Aging (executive branch agency) does not further our goals of integration of services for older adults and persons with disabilities. At a time when Connecticut faces dramatic programmatic cuts, the Council is concerned about creating a new administrative structure, particularly one whose design is contrary to national trends and best practices, as illustrated in the UConn Health Center, Center on Aging's Long-Term Care Needs Assessment commissioned by the Legislature and other national research.

Long-Term Care Advisory Council Member Organizations:

CT Council for Persons with Disabilities
CT Association of Health Care Facilities
CT Assisted Living Association
New England Health Care Employees Union, District 1199
Consumer/City of New Haven Services for Persons with Disabilities
Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman
CT Association for Home Care and Hospice, Inc.
CT Community Care, Inc.
American College of Health Care Administrators
Consumers
CT Alzheimer's Association
AARP-Connecticut
CT Association of Personal Assistants
CT Association of Area Agencies on Aging
CT Coalition of Resident Councils
CANPFA
Family Caregiver/National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Connecticut Chapter
CT Commission on Aging (Co-Chair, LTCAC)
CT Association of Adult Day Centers
CT Association of Residential Care Homes

The Long-Term Care Advisory Council believes that individuals should have real choice in how and where they receive long-term care services and supports, including in their homes and communities.

The present system is fragmented, institutionally biased and difficult for people to navigate.

In order to provide this choice for older adults and persons with disabilities, Connecticut's policymakers must commit to full support and a sweeping redesign of the long-term care infrastructure.

The Modern Definition of Long-Term Care:

The entire range of assistance, services, or devices provided over an extended period of time to meet medical, personal, and social needs in a variety of settings and locations.

- Not just nursing homes
- Not Just Insurance

*Long-term care knows
no age or disability boundary!*

For more information, please call the CT Commission on Aging, at 860-240-5200.